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ESWATINI FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

EFA PRESIDENT & CEO PARTICIPATE IN THE ONLINE FIFA CONGRESS

EFA PRESIDENT SHARES HIS FOOTBALL EXPERIENCE



REFEREES WILL BE LICENSED

PLE WANTS TO PROFESSIONALISE CLUB FOOTBALL

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EFA PRESIDENT AND CEO PARTICIPATE IN AN ONLINE FIFA CONGRESS



The EFA President Mr. Adam Mthethwa and FIFA President Mr Gianni Infantino.

For the first time in the history of football, the Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) hosted its annual congress online due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. This event was held on Friday, 18th September 2020 where FIFA delivered her activity and financial reports amongst other agenda items. The event marked the 70th FIFA Congress since the organisation was established.

The EFA was represented by its President Mr. Adam Mthethwa and the General Secretary (GS) Mr. Frederick Mngomezulu in the one hour thirty-one minutes and fifty-nine seconds events that was also observed by millions of people around the globe true to digital platforms of FIFA.

"Even though it was the first time for FIFA to host her congress online, the event was world class. FIFA is growing as an organization, and her product as well which is football as one can attest to the development programmes implemented over the years around the globe as it was highlighted in her report. I am also pleased with her commitment towards the development of women's football which is in line with what the EFA is doing" Mthethwa said after being asked to react after the congress.

EFA TO LICENSE REFEREES

The Eswatini Football Association (EFA) will as of this coming season (2020/21) license referees in the country. This was disclosed by the EFA's General Secretary (GS) Mr. Frederick Mngomezulu during the online closing ceremony of the FIFA MA Youth Refereeing Course which was also implemented virtually due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"As from the 2020/21 football season, the EFA will license referees in the country", Mngomezulu said.



EFA GS Mr. Frederick Mngomezulu

This is one of the numerous ways in which the EFA will be enhancing the development of refereeing in the Kingdom. During the same closing event, the GS also gave an assurance that the EFA is committed in supporting referees in the country. "As EFA, we are commitment in making our referees to be better performers in both the domestic and international arena", Mngomezulu said.

On another note the Eswatini Football Association's General Secretary (GS), Mr. Frederick Mngomezulu also urged the referees in the country to work extra hard in order to be best referees. "The sky is the limit. Remember, dedication and perseverance are also vital if you want to succeed", Mngomezulu said. He also emphasized the importance of staying in shape. In conclusion the GS expressed the EFA's acknowledgement for her investment in the development of football in the country.

In reaction to these latest developments in as far as refereeing is concerned to this latest development in refereeing in the country, the Eswatini Referees Association (ERA) acknowledged the licensing of referees in the country and the development of referees that is being implemented by the FIFA and EFA.

"The licensing of referees in Eswatini has been long overdue thus as the ERA we are delighted with this action that the EFA is implementing as this will benefit our members in numerous ways. We will also be in a better position to have access to a more accurate data base for our membership that can be useful for the betterment of the referees association. It will also be much easier for us to strategies our own development programmes of our Members", said Mbongeni Shongwe who is the General Secretary of the ERA.

In conclusion, he also acknowledged FIFA and the EFA for their investments towards the development of refereeing in the country.

FIFA HOST TWO ONLINE REFEREEING COURSES

On Monday, 21st – Wednesday, 23rd September 2020, the Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA) implemented two online refereeing courses for local referees. These were the FIFA MA Refereeing Course which had thirty participants and the FIFA MA Youth Course which had eighteen participants.

The content of both courses covered the technical and physical fitness aspects of refereeing. Some of the topics discussed included; the amendment of the laws of the game, positioning and reading, offside and tactical fouls to mention but a few.



EFA Instructor Mr. Kuhle Mkhatjwa during the FIFA MA Refereeing Course

The main objectives of these courses were to enhance the development of the participants as they are active referees. The MA Refereeing Course was also utilized amongst other requirements to recommend Eswatini referees and assistant referees for the 2021 FIFA Lists of Referees and Assistant Referees.



EFA PRESIDENT SHARES HIS FOOTBALL EXPERIENCE

The Eswatini Football Association's President Mr. Adam Mthethwa is one of the experianced football administrators globally as he has served the beautiful game for over twenty- five years with the better part of his services being the head of football in Eswatini. Here, he shares to us his experiances of the hot seat of being in the leadership position of the most popular sport on the land.



The EFA President Adam Mthethwa during the interview

Good Morning Mr President.

Good Morning Chief.

Mr President, you have a long history in football, can you briefly share some of it for us?

Yoh Rhoo. I grew up as a football person and I am still in football. Oh my God I'm now a grandfather who can tell a lot of stories (laughs). When I came into football in 1995 with a group of people with the likes of Dr. Tambo Gina who is now the Minister of Economic Planning and for Secretary to Cabinet Mr. Mbuso Dlamini to name some of them. We arrived as

an interim committee chaired by Dr. Gina and his vice was Mr. Dlamini who latter became the Chairman after Dr. Gina went overseas. It all started in that year when I was elected as the General Secretary of the football association and during that time a lot of things were not yet implemented like today where we now there is a constitution in place that governs the association in the country. During the Annual General Assembly of the same year, to my surprise, I was elected as president of the organisation. From that year to date minus four years I have been elected to the presidency by the assemble. I have worked with great people over the years with the likes of Moses Motsa a prominent business people amongst others. I was once a popular football player for Mbabane Highlanders FC even though I didn't command a regular place in the first eleven (laughs). As EFA we have a long history as some time ago people were saying we were operating from car boots but look now, we have offices and other assets. We also have development programmes like other international football associations in the world may be the difference can be the availability of resources as we operate in different environments.

Do you think the negative allegations by some people mainly finances are there to push your leadership?

We are in a public office elected by the member associations and we have to account to that. We read about this thing in the press but what is important is the accountability part that we have to do. The way we do it, we account every year during the EFA General Assembly. The president addresses the delegates including the operations of the organisations; we have the activity report and financial report. This year we even published the financial statements in the press. These are public document for everyone to see. The money that comes from FIFA has conditions and you have to account for it thus as the football association we believe we are doing just that. But people critics are normal and people are free to do so.

What do you think can change Sihlangu's performance for the better?

Every player wants to play for the big teams in the country and ultimately the national team and if this happens its an achievement for that particular player. If you can recall, when Mbabane Swallows FC was doing well in Africa, the national team benefited. The EFA doesn't own any player in the country but is responsible for development programmes. It is normal that when the national team is not doing well, the FA will take the blame. Club football plays a vital role in the success of the national team due to the fact that players spend most of their time with the teams.

If you retain you presidency, what innovations will you implement?

When you are in a public office you have to respect people's opinions. Football is for everyone and a lot of people understand it. I am responsible for what I am doing as the EFA President. I don't want to talk about elections now even though the build up towards them has already started. The best thing to do is to do the right things. Unfortunately I cannot say much on your question rather than to respect what the congress will say.

Is there an effort by the EFA to convince government to lift the ban on playing football?

We are doing something. The most important thing is the lives of people as per FIFA's statements to her Member Associations regarding the return of football under COVID-19 conditions. A strategic plan for the return of football has been presented to Government which shows that as EFA, we do have a detail plan in place if government can say football can now be played.

Are there any possibilities of the national team to be in action in November?

We have found ourselves in a difficult position. We are also worried about the situation as we are talking about lives of people. Unfortunately this is beyond our control. The fact is that we don't know what the future holds for us in as far as the current situation is concerned. The fact is that we have presented something to Government on how we can conduct ourselves if we can return to football. What might happen is that the national team, may participate with unprepared players if it is possible which is a difficult situation. However, we will be guided by Government. We are positive that something positive might come, even though this is a difficult period for everyone. What is key is that every life involved must be safe.

Thanks a lot Mr. President for your time.

You are always welcomed.



The EFA President addressing the delegates during the 2020 Ordinary General Assembly.

EFA MORN THE SHOCKING DECEASE OF MR. PAT MAHLALELA



The late former Manzini Wanderers FC Administrator Mr. Pat Mahlalela

The Eswatini Football Association (EFA) and the entire football intimate in Eswatini expressed its note of heartfelt and profound condolences as well as symbol of accord to the Pat Mahlalela's Family and relatives; Manzini Wanderers FC, Mbabane Hellenic FC; his employers, National Emergency Response Council on HIV and AIDS (NERCHA), friends, affected establishments and the entire football family, for the untimely shocking demise of Mr. Pat Mahlalela who was a seasoned football administrator for the two mentioned clubs.

"The EFA is still in disbelief on the shocking loss of Mr. Pat Mahlalela who served football diligently with his administration skills in the football clubs where he was attached", said the General Secretary of the EFA, Mr. Frederick Mngomezulu.

He continued lament Mahlalela's demise as he will be greatly missed by football due to the fact that he was still expected to prolong his services and significantly contribute to the development of the sport in the country.

PLE BOG's ATTEND THE CLUB LICENSING WORKSHOP



EFA'S Mr. Elphas Ngcamphalala workshopping the PLE BOG's during the Club Licensing Workshop

Club Licensing is one of the important tools of football which is about the promotion and improvement of the quality and level of all football aspects in a football club. Its objectives are; to ensure that clubs have the appropriate infrastructure, knowledge and application in respect of management and organization, to adopt and improve the clubs sporting infrastructure; to improve the economic and financial capacity of the club, through proper corporate governance and control, to ensure and guarantee the continuity of international competitions of clubs during the season, and to allow the parallel development and comparison amongst clubs by ensuring the necessary compliance in terms of financial, sporting, legal, administrative and infrastructure criteria.



During this workshop, it was highlighted that the Premier League clubs are expected to comply with the following statutory requirement in regard of the five criteria of club licensing:

1. Sporting
   Each club must have one youth team within the range of 16-21 years old and another one within the age group of 10-15 years old.

2. Infrastructure
   Each club must own or have a lease agreement of a match venue and training facilities to be used during the 2020/21 football season.

3. Personnel and Administration
   The clubs must have a fully functional office space with proper signage and qualified staff.

4. Legal
   Each club must have its own constitution and declaration of ownership and control. This must be accompanied with a declaration on compliance with competitions and statutory requirements of FIFA, CAF, EFA and PLE.

5. Financial
   Football clubs must have audited financial statements for the 2019/2020 football season.

FIFA CONNECT WORSHOPS KICKS- OFF

The Eswatini Football Association (EFA) has commenced the implementation of some essential workshops for football clubs to train them in preparation of player registration. The target audience for these workshops are the representatives of football clubs of the premier league, the national first division league and the regional super leagues.

According to the Club Licensing and international Affairs Manager Ms Ntombifuthi Dlamini, the major goals of FIFA Connect are to systematically register the players and other stakeholders, to establish information systems standards for the exchange of data across national borders, and the promotion of a more fact-base management of football development activities following global standard. “FIFA Connect also serves to future ensure the protection of minors and the execution of FIFA’s solidarity mechanism, being a mechanism to reward or recognize the football clubs that were involved in the development of a player”, Dlamini said.

Benefits of FIFA Connect

She urged all the targeted football clubs to participate in these workshops as it has numerous benefits which includes; the full visibility of the football landscape which has a tremendous impact on governance, the ability to know the players better which is vital for football development. “Football clubs are also able to register players online without having to travel to the football association’s offices to do so; which enhances the efficiency associated with player registration”, Dlamini said. She also stated that the implementation



Participants during one of the FIFA Connect Registration Workshop.

of this system fulfills FIFA’s global objective to use current technologies to promote and facilitate the systematic exchange of information and knowledge between the FIFA Member Associations.

Schedule

- 25/09/2020; Shiselweni Regional League (Northern) at King Sobhuza Stadium @ 0900hrs.
- 26/09/2020; Shiselweni Regional Super League (Southern) at King Sobhuza Stadium @ 0900hrs.
- 30/09/2020; Women Football League at Sigwaca House @ 1400hrs.
- 02/10/2020; Shiselweni Regional Super League (Promoted Clubs) at King Sobhuza Stadium @ 0900hrs.
- 03/10/2020; Hhohho Regional Super League (Northern) at Sigwaca House @ 0900hrs.
- 04/10/2020; Hhohho Regional Super League (Southern) at Sigwaca House @ 0900hrs.
- 07/10/2020; Hhohho Regional Super League (Promoted Clubs) at Sigwaca House @ 0900hrs.
- 10/10/2020; Manzini Regional Super League at Bosco Skills Centre @ 0900hrs.
- 17/10/2020; MTN Premier League at Sigwaca House @0900hrs.
- 18/10/2020; MTN National 1st Division at Sigwaca House @ 0900hrs.
- 24/10/2020; Lubombo Regional Super League at KaLanga @ 0900hrs.
- 25/10/2020; Lubombo Super League (Promoted Clubs) at KaLanga @ 0900hrs.

CAF MEET HER MEMBERS OVER THE WOMEN FOOTBALL STRATEGY

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) met her member associations to discuss the women football development strategy that will be a guideline in the development of the women's game in the African continent. This indicates a new era in as far the women's football is concerned.



Celiwe Nkambule (right) in action for Eswatini

Due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was implemented online. The Eswatini Football Association (EFA) was represented by the General Secretary (GS) Mr. Frederick Mngomezulu, Technical Director (TD) Mr. Bhekisisa Mkhonta and the Women's Football Officer Ms Sibongile Skaggel.

"This strategy will drive the development and promotion of the women's game. It sets out a clear roadmap for the deployment of specific actions which started with the youth teams which is a revolution in women's football", said the TD, Mr. Bhekisisa Mkhonta.

According to this strategy, CAF hopes to do better, by increasing the number of women officials, identifying new audiences, developing the sporting, social and economic impact of women's football on the continent. The African football governing body has taken the responsibility of ensuring that women's football is given the proper undivided attention it needs to grow and flourish in the African continent. "CAF will work diligently with zonal unions to increase the number of women's competitions for clubs and national teams at youth and senior levels. This will be done by implementing centralized zonal tournaments to enhance the qualifying pathways to youth and senior CAF competitions", Mkhonta said.

Such implementation will give birth to the inter clubs CAF competitions such as the champions league just like what is happening in men's football.

WE WANT TO PROFESSIONALISE CLUB FOOTBALL-PLE CHAIRMAN



Premier League of Eswatini Chairman, Mr. Mark Carmichael

It is a matter of a new broom sweeps clean for the Premier League of Eswatini (PLE) as the new Executive Committee takes office. Some of them may not be new per se as they were present during the previous Executive Committee which cushions the experience aspect in as far as the leadership of the organisation is concerned. The new Executive Committee Members are Mr. Mark Carmichael (Chairman), Mr. Sipho Bhembe, Mr. Rudolph Matsenjwa, Mr. Charles Matsebula, Mr. Victor Rodriquez, Mr. Mashumi Shongwe and Mr. Sibusiso Nxumalo. Through the Chairman, the new Executive Committee of the PLE promised to work hard during its term in office. Their main goal is to implement revenue generating strategies that will enhance the professionalization of club football.

"As PLE, we want to implement revenue generation strategies that will lead to the

professionalization of club football at premier league level in the country", Carmichael said. In doing so, the new Executive Committee has it in mind that the future of the game is in the implementation of proper structures of football development at club level. "In whatever you do in life, you cannot be a heavy without a foundation", Carmichael highlighted.

As by being the Chairman of the PLE, constitutionally he is one of the Vice Presidents of the Eswatini Football Association (EFA) as the other ones are Dr. Comfort Shongwe and Mr. Peter Simelane.

With the EFA currently implementing the CAF Club Licensing at premier league level, he emphasized the importance of clubs in implementing it as it will enhance the development of football in the country. "Club Licensing is the way to go if we are serious about professionalization of football in the country", he concluded.

